

**Introduced by Senator Pan**

March 19, 2015

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 7—Relative to physicians.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL’S DIGEST

SJR 7, as introduced, Pan. Medical residency programs.

This measure would urge the Congress and the President of the United States to renew funding for the Health Resources and Services Administration’s Teaching Health Center and Primary Care Residency Expansion Graduate Medical Education Programs, and to lift the freeze on residency positions funded by Medicare to expand physician supply and improve access to health care.

Fiscal committee: no.

- 1 WHEREAS, According to a 2014 report by the California  
2 Healthcare Foundation, although California has more than 105,000  
3 licensed physicians, only 71,000 are actively involved in providing  
4 patient care; and  
5 WHEREAS, Certain regions of the state, such as the San Joaquin  
6 Valley and the Inland Empire, lack the recommended supply of  
7 primary care and specialty physicians and, as a result, those areas  
8 have higher populations in poor health; and  
9 WHEREAS, California’s shortage and poor distribution of  
10 physicians is likely to be exacerbated by increased levels of insured  
11 patients and projected increases in the number of physicians  
12 planning to retire; and  
13 WHEREAS, Federal funding levels for residency training  
14 programs have been frozen since 1997, while California’s

1 population has increased by more than 10 percent since that time;  
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Medicare's rigid payment formulas for Graduate  
4 Medical Education do not allow for the innovation needed to  
5 improve medical education to produce physicians with the  
6 appropriate training needed to meet the nation's current and future  
7 health care needs; and

8 WHEREAS, California has been able to address only a minimal  
9 portion of primary care residency programs' funding shortfall with  
10 state funds; and

11 WHEREAS, in 2014, more than 400 California medical school  
12 graduates went "unmatched," meaning they were unable to find a  
13 residency program in our state to complete their training; and

14 WHEREAS, Many primary care physicians, including those  
15 who have graduated from California medical schools, want to train  
16 in California, but are forced to leave the state because of the  
17 shortage in training slots at residency programs; and

18 WHEREAS, California has the highest retention rate of  
19 physicians who complete their residency training in-state; and

20 WHEREAS, increasing funding for primary care medical  
21 residency training programs is a critical step in addressing the  
22 physician shortage problem and improving access to medical care;  
23 now, therefore, be it

24 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*  
25 *California, jointly*, That the Legislature calls upon Congress and  
26 the President of the United States to renew funding for the Health  
27 Resources and Services Administration's Teaching Health Center  
28 and Primary Care Residency Expansion Graduate Medical  
29 Education Programs that are set to expire this year; and be it further

30 *Resolved*, that the Legislature calls upon Congress and the  
31 President to lift the freeze on residency positions funded by  
32 Medicare to expand physician supply and improve access to care;  
33 and be it further

34 *Resolved*, That the Legislature calls upon Congress and the  
35 President to encourage the development of primary care physician  
36 training programs in ambulatory, community, and medically  
37 underserved sites through new funding methodologies and  
38 incentives; and be it further

39 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
40 this resolution to the President and the Vice President of the United

- 1 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
- 2 Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative
- 3 from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the
- 4 author for appropriate distribution.

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